

Message Text

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SUBJECT: WEEKLY STATUS REPORT - KOREA

TO: EA - MR. HOLBROOKE

FROM: EA/K - ROBERT G. RICH, JR.

1. JAPANESE EXPRESS CONCERN AT U.S. HANDLING OF KOREA
ISSUES (SECRET)

DURING US-JAPAN PLANNING TALKS IN WASHINGTON THIS WEEK,
JAPANESE PARTICIPANTS WERE VERY FORTHRIGHT IN THEIR
CRITICISM OF U.S. HANDLING OF KOREAN POLICY. THEY SAID
THE ROK HAD SUFFERED MOST UNFAIRLY FROM THE UNEVEN AP-
PLICATION OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES, AND THE COMBINA-
TION OF TROOP WITHDRAWAL WITH HUMAN RIGHTS CRITICISMS HAD
SERVED TO WEAKEN THE ROK IN THE EYES OF THE NORTH. VIEWING
THE NEXT FEW YEARS AS CRITICAL IN DETERRING NORTH KOREAN
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AGGRESSION, THE JAPANESE CONCLUDED THAT THE ROK AS AN
ALLY DESERVED GREATER USG FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT THAN IT
HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED. THE CONGRESSIONAL DEMAND FOR
TESTIMONY BY A FORMER ROK AMBASSADOR WAS TERMED "BEYOND
COMPREHENSION." (RGR).

2. F-16 DECISION (CONFIDENTIAL)

SECRETARIES VANCE AND BROWN AGREED JUNE 5 TO RESPOND TO A KOREAN REQUEST FOR AN LOA ON 60 F-16 AIRCRAFT BY REAFFIRMING OUR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO SELL THE PLANE, BUT DECLINING TO DO SO AT PRESENT. THE KOREANS MAY REGARD THIS RESPONSE AS BAD NEWS; HOWEVER, AN OPTION ADVOCATED BY ACDA AND HA WOULD HAVE RENEGED ON THE EARLIER COMMITMENT. WE HAVE ASKED AMBASSADOR SNEIDER'S ADVICE ON HOW BEST TO INFORM THE ROKG OF THE DECISION, WHICH WILL OBVIOUSLY BE DISCUSSED FURTHER AT THE JULY SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING. (DB).

3. ROK INDIGENOUS TANK (ROKIT) BRIEFING (CONFIDENTIAL)

ON JUNE 6, BLAKEMORE AND MISCH RECEIVED AN INFORMATIVE BRIEFING ON THE ROKIT FROM THE DEFENSE ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY (DARPA) AND REPRESENTATIVES OF A CONTRACTOR WHICH OPERATES ON A RETAINER TO DARPA. DARPA IS FUNDING A STUDY OF THE ARMOR/ANTI-ARMOR BALANCE IN KOREA (\$200,000) AND AN INITIAL STUDY OF THE ROKIT (\$25,000). THE CONTRACTOR HAS BROUGHT TOGETHER ROK REPRESENTATIVES AND POTENTIAL U.S. CONTRACTORS, AND WILL ASSIST THE KOREANS IN THE EVALUATION OF VARIOUS TANK PROPOSALS. THE TANK PROGRAM HAS TWO DISTINCT PARTS: A) PRODUCE TWO OPERATIONAL PROTOTYPES FOR THE 1980 ARMED FORCES DAY PARADE (ESTIMATED TO COST \$20 MILLION EACH);
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AND B) DESIGN AND PRODUCE A COMPLETELY NEW TANK CAPABLE OF MEETING THE EXPECTED THREAT FROM NORTH KOREA. A ROUGH ESTIMATE OF DEVELOPMENT AND TOOLING COSTS BEFORE PRODUCTION IS \$250 MILLION, AND THE 1,000 TANKS THE KOREANS HOPE TO PRODUCE WOULD COST ABOUT \$500,000 EACH IN 1978 DOLLARS. CONCEIVABLY THE KOREANS WOULD PAY ABOUT \$20 PER CAPITA FOR THIS WEAPONS SYSTEMS. (FHM).

4. KOREA INVESTIGATION HEARINGS (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

A NEW ROUND OF FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS OPENED JUNE 1 WITH TESTIMONY BY AMBASSADOR SNEIDER ON US-ROK RELATIONS AND CONDITIONS IN KOREA FROM 1972 TO PRESENT AND SPECIFIC STATE DEPARTMENT KNOWLEDGE AND ACTIONS WITH REGARD TO ILLEGAL OR IMPROPER KOREAN ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED STATES. FURTHER HEARINGS HAVE BEEN HELD JUNE 6 AND 7. TESTIMONY HAS INCLUDED THE INCIDENT IN WHICH FORMER WHITE HOUSE AIDE JOHN NIDECKER WAS OFFERED MONEY DURING A TRIP TO KOREA, ALLEGATIONS OF HARASSMENT OF KOREAN RESIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES, KOREAN GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN STOPPING A PLANNED DEMONSTRATION IN THE

U.S. BY THE UNIFICATION CHURCH, AND EVIDENCE OF LAUNDERED FUNDS BEING FUNNELED TO CERTAIN KOREAN-AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PAST. NO SIGNIFICANT NEW INFORMATION HAS EMERGED IN THIS ROUND THUS FAR, BUT AMBASSADOR SNEIDER'S APPEARANCE OFFERED USEFUL OPPORTUNITY TO PLACE THE DEPARTMENT'S HANDLING OF THESE EVENTS PARTIALLY IN THE RECORD. HEARINGS WILL CONTINUE TWO DAYS NEXT WEEK AND INTERMITTENTLY THEREAFTER INTO EARLY JULY. (WH).

5. KOREANS TO RELEASE FISHERMEN (CONFIDENTIAL)

AT THE JUNE 7 MILITARY ARMISTICE COMMISSION MEETING, THE UNC SIDE ANNOUNCED THAT IT WAS PREPARED TO RELEASE
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THE EIGHT NORTH KOREAN FISHERMEN ON JUNE 13. AT A SUBSEQUENT MAC SECRETARIES MEETING, UN AND NORTH KOREAN REPRESENTATIVES WORKED OUT DETAILS FOR THE RELEASE WHICH WILL BE SIMILAR TO THE RETURN OF THE U.S. HELICOPTER CREWMEN FROM NORTH KOREA LAST JULY. MEANWHILE, THE FISHERMEN ARE ON AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TOUR OF SOUTH KOREA. (FHM).

6. TACOMA WASHINGTON SEMINAR ON ETHICS AND FOREIGN POLICY (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

DAVID BLAKEMORE PARTICIPATED IN A SEMINAR AT PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY MAY 30 - JUNE 2 ON ETHICS AND FOREIGN POLICY: THE KOREAN CASE. THE RESPONSE OF THE PARTICIPANTS - CLERGYMEN, ACADEMICS AND BUSINESSMEN - SHOWED A SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTERPLAY AMONG OUR VARIOUS POLICY OBJECTIVES IN KOREA, PARTICULARLY HUMAN RIGHTS AND SECURITY. THEY WERE LESS UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THEY PERCEIVED AS AN EXCESSIVELY NARROW POLICY TOWARD NORTH KOREA WHICH PRECLUDED CONTACT WITH THE NORTH. THE TRIP WAS A USEFUL FORAY INTO THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS ARENA, AND HORIZONS WERE EXPANDED ON BOTH SIDES. (DB). VANCE

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